

Commercial Filming and Still Photography Permits

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Lands of the United States were set aside by Congress, Executive or otherwise acquired in order to conserve and protect areas of untold beauty and grandeur, historical importance, and uniqueness for future generations. This tradition started with explorers who traveled with paint and canvas or primitive photo apparatus before the areas were designated as a national park. The National Park Service permits commercial filming and still photography when it is consistent with the park's mission and will not harm the resource or interfere with the visitor experience.

When is a permit needed?

All commercial filming activities taking place within a unit of the National Park system require a permit. Commercial filming includes capturing a moving image on film and video as well as sound recordings.

Still photographers require a permit when

1. the activity takes place at location(s) where or when members of the public are generally not allowed; or
2. the activity uses model(s), sets(s), or prop(s) that are not a part of the location's natural or cultural resources or administrative facilities; or
3. Park would incur additional administrative costs to monitor the activity.

How do I apply for apply for a permit?

Permit application are available through each park administrative office or on some park web sites. Park Headquarters' addresses are found on the web at <http://www.nps.gov/parks.html>.

You should submit a completed application along with the application fee to the park where you want to film or photograph as far in advance of your planned date at possible. In addition, you should request a meeting with park staff if your proposed activity is unusual or complex. Early consultation with park staff will help them process the application in a timely manner once it is submitted.

What fees will I have to pay?

The National Park Service is authorized to collect two fees; cost recovery and a location fee. Cost recovery includes an application fee which must be submitted with your application and well as a charge to cover the costs incurred by the National Park Service in processing your request and monitoring your permit. This amount will vary depending on the size and complexity of your permit.

In addition, the National Park Service has been directed by Congress to collect a fee to provide a fair return to the United States for the use of park lands. The National Park Service uses the following fee schedule:

Commercial Filming/Videos		Still Photography	
1 - 2 people, camera & tripod only	\$0/day		
1 - 10 people	\$150/day	1 - 10 people	\$50/day
11 - 30 people	\$250/day	11 - 30 people	\$150/day
31 - 49 people	\$500/day	Over 30 people	\$250/day
Over 50 people	\$750/day		

Are there other permit requirements?

You will be required to obtain liability insurance naming the United States as additionally insured in an amount commensurate with the risk posed to park resources by your proposed activity. You may also be asked to post a bond to ensure the payment of all charges and fees and the restoration of the area if necessary.